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**ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY**

1789 W. Jefferson • P.O. Box 6123 • Phoenix, AZ 85005

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Janet Napolitano  
Governor

Tracy L. Wareing  
Director

December 22, 2006

**WIA Guidance Letter #20-06**

**Rescinds Guidance Letter #08-05, dated July 1, 2005**

**Subject: Literacy and Numeracy Gains for Out-of-School Youth with Basic Skills Deficiencies**

**References:** P.L. 105-220 Workforce Investment Act, Sections 101(4)(33)(34), 136 and 188; 20 CFR 666.140(a)(2); 29 CFR Part 37; 34 CFR Part 99, Training and Employment Guidance Letter #17-05

**Purpose:** This guidance letter provides direction on the literacy and numeracy performance measure. It rescinds WIA Guidance Letter #08-05 and complies with U.S. Department of Labor, TEGL #17-05, *Common Measures Policy*, which provides a single guidance document on common measures and the performance accountability system. TEGL #17-05 can be downloaded at <http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/> by selecting "TEGL -Training and Employment Guidance Letter" and "2005" and then following the links.

**Background:** The literacy and numeracy performance measure determines the progress of out-of-school youth, ages 14-21, who are basic skills deficient and enrolled in WIA on or after July 1, 2005. Participants who are not basic skills deficient cannot achieve a positive outcome in this measure, so do not create a literacy/numeracy record for those participants.

**Definitions:**

**Basic Skills Deficient** A youth who is unable to do **any** of the following **at or below the 8.9 grade level** is basic skills deficient:

- compute or solve math problems
- write English
- read English
- speak English

**OR**

A youth who is unable to do **any** of the following **at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society** is basic skills deficient:

- compute or solve math problems
- write English
- read English
- speak English

**Note:** This is a **different definition** than Public Law 105-220, Section 101(4).

**Out-of-School Youth** An out-of-school youth is an eligible youth who is a school dropout, or has received a secondary school diploma or its equivalent but is basic skills deficient, unemployed, or underemployed according to Public Law 105-220, Section 101(33). Determination of in-school or out of school status is only made at program registration.

For reporting purposes, out-of-school youth includes all youth **except**:

- those who are attending any school and have not received a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, **or**
- those who are attending post-secondary school and are not basic skills deficient.

**Testing must be administered during the eligibility determination process or no later than the date of participation. The same test and version (i.e. TABE Version 8) must be used for both pre and post-tests.**

**Note:** Arizona's policy is **more restrictive** than federal requirements outlined in TEGL #17-05 as the State believes it is critical for youth program operators to identify the skill levels of youth prior to making programmatic and service decisions.

**Formula for Literacy and Numeracy Gains on *Out-of-School Youth (ages 14-21) who are basic skills deficient*:**

$$\text{(divided by)} \frac{\text{Number of participants who increase one or more educational functioning levels}}{\text{Number of participants who have completed a year in the program (i.e., one year from the date of participation) plus the number of participants who exit before completing a full year in the program.}}$$

To be included in the numerator, a participant must demonstrate on the post-test that he/she has advanced one or more educational functioning levels beyond the level in which he/she was initially placed by the pre-test. The one year time period begins on the date of the first youth program service (date of participation), not the date of pre-test.

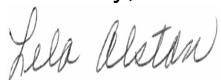
**ACTION REQUIRED:** Effective July 1, 2005, LWIAs **must pre-test all out-of-school youth** to determine which youth are basic skills deficient **no later than the date of participation** (formerly date of registration). Documentation of literacy, numeracy and basic skills deficiency must be noted in the youth's case file.

Participants who have been identified as basic skills deficient must be recorded in the Virtual One-Stop System (VOS) and must be post-tested prior to the end of the one year following the individual's participation date. No more than four (4) assessment tests may be administered during the year. The most **recent assessment** within one year of participation **must** be used as the post-test score if more than one assessment was administered after the initial test.

**Individuals who remain basic skills deficient** after participating for a full year and remain in the program must continue to receive basic skills remediation services, regardless of whether they have increased one or more educational functioning levels. Those participants must be included in the measure for the first year of participation. At the end of a **full** second year, these participants must be post-tested and included in the measure again. If the participant does not complete a full second year, do not include that individual in the measure.

Please distribute this information to all appropriate program staff. If you need additional information, please contact your Field Operations Liaison at (602) 542-3957. All WIA Guidance Letters are posted on the WIA website at <http://www.azdes.gov/wia/infomemos.asp>.

Sincerely,



Lela Alston  
WIA Section Manager  
Employment Administration